

Summary of Deed Restrictions

Please note: This list is not inclusive. To avoid misunderstandings and inconvenience, always contact The Woodlands Township for the current standard as applicable. Phone 281-210-3973.

The Woodlands is a master-planned community.

Construction and expansion of The Woodlands proceeds according to a carefully designed master plan. It provides for orderly development as each phase of residential, commercial and industrial land usage unfolds. Planning began long before the first street was laid or the first house was built. Long-range planning continues in order to preserve the quality of development and to maintain compatibility with the environment. That is why The Woodlands is unique!

Covenants protect and perpetuate the quality of our community.

Ongoing development of The Woodlands is guided by a group of legally binding covenants and design standards which protect the aesthetic integrity of the community for generations to come. Additions and modifications to residential properties must be in compliance with these guidelines, thus assuring continuation of good design, maintenance of property values and preservation of the natural environment.

Residential Design Review Committees facilitate covenant protections.

Each developed village in The Woodlands has a Residential Design Review Committee (RDRC) made up of at least three people elected by the village residents and property owners to serve one-year terms. Committee members serve in a volunteer capacity and represent the resident viewpoint essential to the evaluation and approval process. Each village Residential Design Review Committee meets at least once a month to review property owners' applications for modifications or additions to their properties. The committees also evaluate violations of established standards and seek constructive resolution of these matters.

Residential Design Review Committee approval of a project is required.

The Covenants require that all changes and improvements to a property must be reviewed by a Plan Review Committee. To minimize delays, the standards pre-approve certain simple projects; other projects are eligible for One-Step Permits upon receipt of a complete application and staff verification that the improvement complies with all requirements of the standards. Response to a One-Step Permit request will generally be given within three working days following submission of a complete application. Major projects require a complete application and review by the Plan Review Committees.

Once a complete application has been submitted, the application is reviewed by the Plan Review Committee. It will then be approved, approved conditionally with modifications, or disapproved. As soon as written notification of approval has been received, the project may begin.

Application forms for various types of projects and copies of the most up-to-date standards are available at The Woodlands Township Service Center, 2201 Lake Woodlands Drive.

The Residential Standards and most forms and the standards are available on the Web site at www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov.

The Residential Design Review Committee aims to assist property owners when making improvements.

The committee's goal in the review process is to assist property owners when making changes. These changes require conformity to the architectural character of the neighborhood and applicable regulations which blends with the natural beauty of our surroundings.

The following is a brief summary for easy reference.

This summary of the protective covenants and residential standards is representative, but not all-inclusive, of those now in effect in The Woodlands. Separate standards govern non-residential projects.

Since the standards are updated from time to time, it is important that residents check with The Woodlands Township for copies of the most current standards. Applications for additions and modifications will be approved on the basis of the standards in effect on the date submitted for review by the Residential Design Review Committee. For further information, contact The Woodlands Township at 281-210-3973. The Woodlands Township Service Center is located at 2201 Lake Woodlands Drive.

Summary of Standards

Fences: Some lots are restricted to a specific fence design, including those with swimming pools or spas, on golf courses or lakes, corner lots, lots adjoining major streets, townhomes, patio homes and those in certain sections of The Woodlands.

Front yard fences, which must be of an "open" design, are limited in height depending on lot size. For most other fences, the maximum height is six feet. If the fence design has a front and a back, the front, or smooth side, must face outward on all sides of the lot. Prohibited fencing materials include: chain, chain link, wire mesh, wirebound picket, plastic, fiberglass, rope and bamboo.

Decks and other patio structures: Decks, patios, arbors, trellises, sunshades, storage sheds, gazebos and similar structures must conform to the architectural character of the existing dwelling. Easements must be observed. Complete instructions and a list of unacceptable construction materials are included with the application form.

Colors and materials: Exterior painting or re-staining with a currently approved color does require approval. Changes in exterior color or material must be reviewed by the committee. This standard applies to doors, shutters, trim and changes in siding and roofing materials. Colors in muted shades are the norm. Canvas awnings and roofs must be of solid muted shades.

Exterior Lighting: Due to their industrial nature, some lamp types and fixture designs are not allowed on residential lots. In general, pole lights, pedestal lights and tree lights intended to shine downward must be located at least 20 feet inward from the street pavement edge and respect all easements. Mercury-vapor lamps are acceptable only in shielded fixtures mounted high in trees to provide low level ambient property illumination (moonlight).

The level of illumination of any light should not be offensive or create a glare when viewed from outside the lot. Directional lights must be aimed into the lot on which they are installed. The light source must be shielded.

Play Structures: Criteria for the color, materials and placement of play equipment and structures are designed to minimize visual impact of the equipment. Basketball goals must be attached to the residence or mounted on a pole at least 20 feet from a street edge and five feet from the side lot line. Play equipment and basketball goals are not permitted on cul-de-sac islands or on the street edge.

Forts, swing sets, etc., are restricted in height and size and must be located in the rear or side yard and not in any easement. Wood construction is preferred.

Room additions, garages, and detached buildings: Please call The Woodlands Township for the Neighborhood Criteria that apply to any lot before planning a project. Special restrictions as to the percentage of a lot which may be covered by hard surface material as well as the restrictions related to the amount of square feet of living area in a given home are attached to each lot. The design of any proposed alteration must be architecturally compatible with the dwelling.

Detailed construction drawings, exterior elevation drawings and specifications for color and materials must accompany the completed application. The drawings must indicate how the proposed improvement will relate architecturally to the existing residence, and the plans must be sealed by an A.I.B.D./T.I.B.D. or N.C.B.D.C. designer, licensed architect or structural engineer. Inspections and a refundable compliance deposit are also required. Conversion of a garage or carport to some use other than for automobile storage is generally prohibited. Exceptions may be granted where an architecturally compatible approved replacement structure is provided.

Pools and spas: Pools and spas must be enclosed by an approved fence with self-closing and self-latching gates. Pool barrier fencing must comply with the Residential Code. The pool and/or spa as well as its associated decking, berms and waterfalls must not encroach upon any easement. Concrete, paving, and interlocking pavers are also limited by standards regulating lot coverage. Additionally, the water surface area is also limited by the standards. The homeowner should allow plenty of time for the application to be processed as drainage, access routes and tree-removal questions are all carefully considered. Inspections and a refundable compliance deposit are required.

Satellite dishes: A satellite dish antenna can be allowed on a lot if the dish is inconspicuous. All dishes must be black or gray in color. The removal of vegetation for signal reception is not allowed. More stringent restrictions apply to dishes over 39 inches in diameter. Since special restrictions apply to the location of satellite dishes on a lot, please phone for information before a purchase is made.

Covenant Provisions

Landscaping and tree removal: In an effort to preserve the forested environment and ecological balance of The Woodlands, no tree greater than six inches in diameter may be removed without approval of the Plan Review Committees. At least 40 percent of the landscaped area of the front yard must be trees, shrubbery, flowers, mulch or plants. Native plants are encouraged.

Pets: Residents of The Woodlands are limited in the number of animals to be kept outside the home. No more than two, either cats and/or dogs, may be kept outside. Puppies and kittens are not counted in this total until they are weaned from their mother. Animals must not be allowed to run at large, but must be confined to the owner's lot or controlled by a restraint device.

Fireworks, firearms and hunting: The sale and use of fireworks and the use or discharge of firearms of any kind whatsoever is strictly prohibited on any property within The Woodlands. Hunting of any kind and by any method is also prohibited.

Residential lot use restrictions: Without prior approval by the Residential Design Review Committee, no structure may be used for any purpose other than that for which it was originally approved. No profession or home industry may be conducted from any residential property without committee approval. Approval may be granted if the activity is shown to be compatible with the residential character of the neighborhood.

Garage, yard, and estates sales are expressly prohibited. The Woodlands Village Associations conduct a flea market twice a year in which residents may participate.

Boat, trailer and automobile parking and storage: Boats, trailers, trailer houses, recreational vehicles, truck campers, semi-truck tractors, or mobile homes, may not be parked 48 consecutive hours or more on any street or any lot, where visible at ground level from a street or adjacent property. Parking on lawns, ditches, open space areas or other dirt, gravel or grassy areas is not allowed. Vehicles which are disabled, not currently licensed or registered, or are otherwise inoperable, may not be stored in view on any lot.

Disposition of trash and other debris: All trash and debris must be placed near the street line no earlier than 6 p.m. the day before regularly scheduled trash pickup. Containers must be removed from public view by 8 p.m. on the day trash is collected. Trash cans may not be stored in public view.

No lumber, metals, bulk materials, refuse or trash may be kept, stored or allowed to accumulate on any lot or adjacent area such as greenbelts or open space areas, drainage easements, vacant lots, etc. Building materials may be stored temporarily on the premises during a construction project for a period not to exceed 120 days.

Use of easements and rights-of-way: Easements provide a buffer zone between properties to minimize the impact of one lot upon another. They are set aside for providing utility service and drainage to each lot, and to provide natural vegetative screening and privacy separations between lots. Being certain that your project respects all easements is perhaps the most compelling reason to contact The Woodlands Township before you complete your project plans.

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